

Message Text

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MCT-01 TRSE-00 OMB-01 AID-05 /068 W
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R 310707Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6086
INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 BELGRADE 2607

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT YO
SUBJECT: POTPOURRI OF INTERNAL EVENTS

REF: (A) BELGRADE 2117 (B) BELGRADE 2294 (C) BELGRADE A-2,
JANUARY 31, 1978 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: THIS ROUNDUP OF INTERNAL POLITICAL NEWS INCLUDES THE
FOLLOWING: DONANC AND THE PRESIDUM; SOME PERSONNEL CHANGES;
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KARDELJ AND HIS BOOK; JOVANKA; YUGOSLAV ATTITUDES ON TERRORIST
THREAT; AND MORE ON MORAL-POLITICAL FITNESS. END SUMMARY.

1. DOLANC AND THE PRESIDUM. THE QUESTION OF DOLANC'S
EXACT FUTURE REMAINS UNANSWERED. CZECH COUNSELOR HAVLIN
ASSURES US SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE MADE TO EXEMPT
HIM FROM ROTATION RULES SO THAT HE CAN CONTINUE

PREEMINENT ROLE IN THE LCY. THIS IS AT LEAST WITHIN THE REALM OF POSSIBILITY--DOLANC HAS SO FAR BEEN NOMINATED AS A MEMBER OF THE PRESIDUM, BUT CROATIAN PRESIDUM MEMBER JURE BILIC SPOKE POINTEDLY LAST MONTH (REF A) OF THE POSSIBILITY OF "EXCEPTIONS" TO ROTATION RULE. ALTHOUGH THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE PER SE IS BEING ABOLISHED, LCY REVISED STATUTE WILL PROVIDE FOR A NUMBER OF EXECUTIVE SECRETARIES WITH SPECIFIC AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY. THEY WILL NOT ATTEND MEETINGS OF THE PRESIDUM EXCEPT WHEN THEIR AREA OF COMPETENCE IS UNDER DISCUSSION, NO WILL THEY BE MEMBERS OF IT. INSTEAD, THEIR WORK WILL BE COORDINATED BY THE "SECRETARY OF THE PRESIDUM", A POST WHICH DOLANC COULD EASILY FILL SINCE STRICTLY SPEAKING HE HAS NOT HELD THAT TITLE BEFORE. ADDITIONALLY, THOSE WHO HAVE THUS FAR BEEN NOMINATED TO THE "EXECUTIVE SECRETARY" POSITIONS, THOUGH SELECTED FROM AMONG MEMBERS OF THE PRESENT CENTRAL COMMITTEE, ARE NOT A PART OF THE TOP LEADERSHIP AND ARE UNLIKELY TO BE STRONG IN THEIR OWN RIGHT. (OFFICIAL NOMINATIONS TO THESE POSITIONS SO FAR INCLUDE VLADO JANZIC, DEPUT SECRETARY OF SLOVENIAN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, AND NANDOR MAJOR, A SECRETARY IN THE VOJVODINA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.) IF DOLANC SHOULD BE NOMINATED AS SECRETARY, IT WOULD TEND TO CONFIRM HIS POSITION AS PRIMUS INTER PARES. THE CASE OF BILIC HIMSELF, AND EQUALLY AMBITIOUS BUT PERHAPS LESS CAUTIOUS MAN WHO HAS IN EFFECT NOT ADVANCED SINCE HE HAS BEEN NOMINATED TO HEAD THE CROATIAN REPUBLICAN ASSEMBLY, IS CONFIDENTIAL

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INSTRUCTIVE IN THAT REGARD.

2. OTHER PERSONNEL CHANGES IN KEY POSITIONS.

(A) DEFENSE. BELGRADE EIGHT PROFESSOR SVETOZAR STOJANOVIC, SAYS SLOWNESS IN ANNOUNCEMENT OF VARIOUS SERBIAN NOMINATIONS FOR HIGH LEADERSHIP POSITIONS WAS DUE TO PROBLEM OF DEFSEC LJUBICIC. HE SAYS EXCLUSION TO MAXIMUM TWO-TERM RULE WOULD HAVE TO BE MADE FOR LJUBICIC TO REMAIN AND THAT SERB LEADERSHIP DOES NOT WANT LJUBICIC IMPOSED ON THEM.

(B) ASSEMBLY. ON MARCH 28 OUR EARLIER INFORMATION (REF B) WAS CONFIRMED BY AN OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT THAT DRAGOSLAV MARKOVIC, PRESIDENT OF SERBIAN PRESIDENCY, HAS BEEN NOMINATED TO TAKE GLIGOROV'S PLACE AS PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERAL ASSEMBLY.

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(C) FOREIGN AFFAIRS. FONSEC MINIC'S SON-IN-LAW
DEJAN DIMOV RECENTLY TOLD EMBOFF THAT VRHOVEC WILL NOT
BE A PARTICULARLY STRONG FOREIGN MINISTER BECAUSE MINIC
WILL RETAIN RESPONSIBILITY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN THE
PRESIDIUM AND HAS NO INTENTION OF "LETTING GO".
ACCORDING TO DIMOV, MINIC WOULD PREFER TO LEAD A
QUIETER LIFE BUT HE IS A GOOD SOLDIER WHO WILL DO
WHAT TITO ASKS. DIMOV FURTHER (AND LESS PLAUSIBLY)
CLAIMS THAT STORIES OF MINIC'S POOR HEALTH ARE
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"NONSENSE", STEMMING ONLY FROM A BAD CASE OF FLU AND
THAT MINIC CANNOT BE "LEFT OUT OF THE EQUATION" IF
THE TITO SUCCESSION IS AT ALL DISORDERLY.

3. KARDELJ. PROFESSOR STOJANOCIC RECENTLY TOLD EMBOFF
THAT AT A MEETING OF SERBIAN SOCIOLOGY SOCIETY HE HAD

SPENT ABOUT 20 MINUTES CRITICIZING KARDELJ'S BOOK BEFORE THE GROUP, POINTING OUT THAT IS CONFUSING AND CONTRADICTIONARY IN MANY PLACES. STOJANOVIC WAS SURPRISED AT THE LACK OF REACTION; USUALLY, HE SAID, SOME PARTY CENTRIST WOULD HAVE REBUTTED HIM, BUT IN THIS CASE HE HAD THE FULL ATTENTION OF THE AUDIENCE, AND WAS NOT ATTACKED. HE IS UNCERTAIN WHETHER THIS IS SOFTENING OF ATTITUDES TOWARD HIM PERSONALLY, AGREEMENT WITH HIS VIEWS OF KARDELJ'S BOOK, OR COMBINATION OF BOTH. KARDELJ, MEANWHILE, HAS NOT APPEARED FREQUENTLY IN PUBLIC OF LATE, BUT WAS PICTURED ON FRONT PAGE OF BORBA IN ATTENDANCE AT MARCH 15 MEETING OF PRESIDUM AND WAS PREPARED TO MEET WITH CODEL ROSTENKOWSKI APRIL 1.

4. JOVANKA.

(A) FRG AMBASSADOR WALKING NEAR TITO'S RESIDENCE IN TOPCIDER ON MARCH 19 ELECTION DAY IDENTIFIED JOVANKA EMERGING FROM RESIDENCE ACCOMPANIED ONLY BY ONE SERVANT. SHE SEEMED TO BE HEADED FOR THE POLLING PLACE.

(B) INTEREST HERE IN JOVANKA SEEMS TO BE DYING DOWN. PROF. STOJANOVIC RECENTLY SAID HE BELIEVES WHOLE AFFAIR IS PURELY PERSONAL AND HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH POLITICS. STILL, THE SUBJECT IS TOUCHY, AS ILLUSTRATED BY TWO JOKES WE HAVE HEARD:

(C) TITO AND JOVANKA DECIDE TO GET DIVORCED AND ARE DISCUSSING DIVIDING UP THE PROPERTY. HE GETS ONE POODLE, SHE GETS ONE; HE KEEPS A MERCEDES, SHE A CONFIDENTIAL

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LINCOLN; THE VILLAS ARE SPLIT EVENLY, AND ALL THE PERSONAL PROPERTY. FINALLY, COMES THE SUBJECT OF ISLANDS. SAYS TITO: "I WILL TAKE BRIONI AND YOU WILL GET GOLI OTOK". (GOLI OTOK IS AN ISLAND OFF THE COAST OF DALMATIA ONE OF TITO'S ON WHICH A LARGE PRISON IS LOCATED; BRIONI IS TITO'S PRIVATE RETREAT.) WE REPEATED THIS JOKE TO ANOTHER YUGOSLAV WHO SAID, "FOR TELLING THAT JOKE YOU TOO CAN GET GOLI OTOK".

(D) TWO BOSNIANS, SUJO AND MUJO, ATTEND A MEETING OF THEIR LOCAL PARTY ORGANIZATION; SUJO STANDS UP TO ASK TWO QUESTIONS: "WHEN WILL WE DISCUSS THE NEW LAW ON WAGES AND PRICES?" AND "WHERE IS JOVANKA?" THE CHAIRMAN ANSWERS QUICKLY, "WE WILL BE DEALING WITH BOTH THOSE QUESTIONS AT OUR MEETING NEXT WEEK, COMRADE". NEXT WEEK, MEETING ROOM IS PACKED AND MUJO RISES: "I HAVE TWO QUESTIONS. FIRST, WHERE IS JOVANKA? AND SECOND, WHERE IS SUJO?"

5. YUGOSLAV ATTITUDES ON TERRORISM. AN NEW SOCIAL ACCORD ON BENEFITS FOR CERTAIN CATEGORIES OF DISABLED PERSONS, SIGNED IN BELGRADE ON FEBRUARY 27, PROVIDES SPECIFICALLY

THAT VICTIMS OF TERRORIST ACTS WILL HENCEFORTH BE
CONSIDERED "CIVILIAN WAR INVALIDS" AND BE ENTITLED TO
BENEFITS ON THE SAME BASIS AS OTHERS IN THAT CATEGORY.
THIS CHANGE IN PART REFLECTS THE DEGREE TO WHICH CONCERN
WITH TERRORISM PERVADES YUGOSLAV OFFICIAL THINKING EVEN
AT THE REPUBLIC LEVEL.

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6. MORAL-POLITICAL FITNESS. IN A PRESS CONFERENCE FOR
FOREIGN NEWSMEN LAST MONTH, STANE DOLANC SAID THAT
MEMBERSHIP IN THE LCY IS NOT A REQUIREMENT FOR AN
INDIVIDUAL TO BE CONSIDERED MORALLY AND POLITICALLY FIT.
HIS REMARKS CAN BE CONSIDERED AS A REPLY TO THE PROTEST
LETTER SIGNED BY NINE DISSIDENT INTELLECTUALS IN
JANUARY (REF C). RATHER THAN DEFINE "MORAL-POLITICAL
FINESS", HOWEVER, DOLANC LIMITED HIMSELF TO CATEGORIZING

THOSE WHO DO NOT QUALIFY: THOSE WHO "OPPOSE SELF-MANAGEMENT
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AND THE POLICY OF NON-ALIGNMENT", CONVICTED CRIMINALS,
AND WARTIME FASCIST COLLABORATORS. THIS ISSUE CONTINUES
TO BE A "LIVE" ONE WHICH BEARS WATCHING.
DOLANC ADDED THAT THE SOCIALIST ALLIANCE "SHOULD
BRING TOGETHER EVERYONE WHO IS FOR SELF-MANAGEMENT
AND NON-ALIGNMENT", THUS CREATING THE IMPRESSION
THAT PERHAPS MEMBERSHIP IN SAWPY WILL BE THE NEW KEY
TO "MORAL-POLITICAL FITNESS."
EAGLEBURGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL PARTIES, COMMUNISTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BELGRA02607
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780139-1053
Format: TEL
From: BELGRADE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978035/aaaaadyy.tel
Line Count: 294
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d1897cc4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 BELGRADE 2117, 78 BELGRADE 2294, 78 BELGRADE A-2
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3277283
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POTPOURRI OF INTERNAL EVENTS
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To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d1897cc4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014